

Data Corp. Delves in Strange Works

STATINTL

Noted Footballer Heads Area Unit Of Dayton Firm

By CHARLES COVELL
Star Business Writer

Pete Vann, Army quarterback of the early 1950s, is doing quite a different brand of quarterbacking in Arlington today.

If you have forgotten, Vann once was called a ball-handling Houdini and rated by the late Coach Earl Blaik as "one of the two best passers I have ever seen at West Point."

Peter J. Vann needs to be a magician these days. He is the eastern division manager for a Dayton (Ohio) company that delves into such seemingly diverse subjects as image analysis and physical optics, the photographic sciences, computer technology and testing and evaluation.

Actually, the company welds these tools into a cohesive unit for work both secret and non-secret. "Basically," Vann explains, "we are in the business of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, about 70 percent of it for the military and 30 percent commercial."

Name Changed

The company is Data Corp., which has 16 acres in the center of a 43-acre research park in Dayton and recently opened a Houston division, as well as the Arlington division.

Data Corp. was formed in 1955 under the name of Systems Development Corp. by Lysle D. Cahill, the president, and William F. Gorog, chairman of the board. Gorog is also a West Point graduate and both are specialists in aerial reconnaissance equipment.

In 1961 the company name was changed to Data Corp. to better describe its association with all types of data handling.

Vann was graduated from West Point in 1956. Subsequently he served in the Army both as

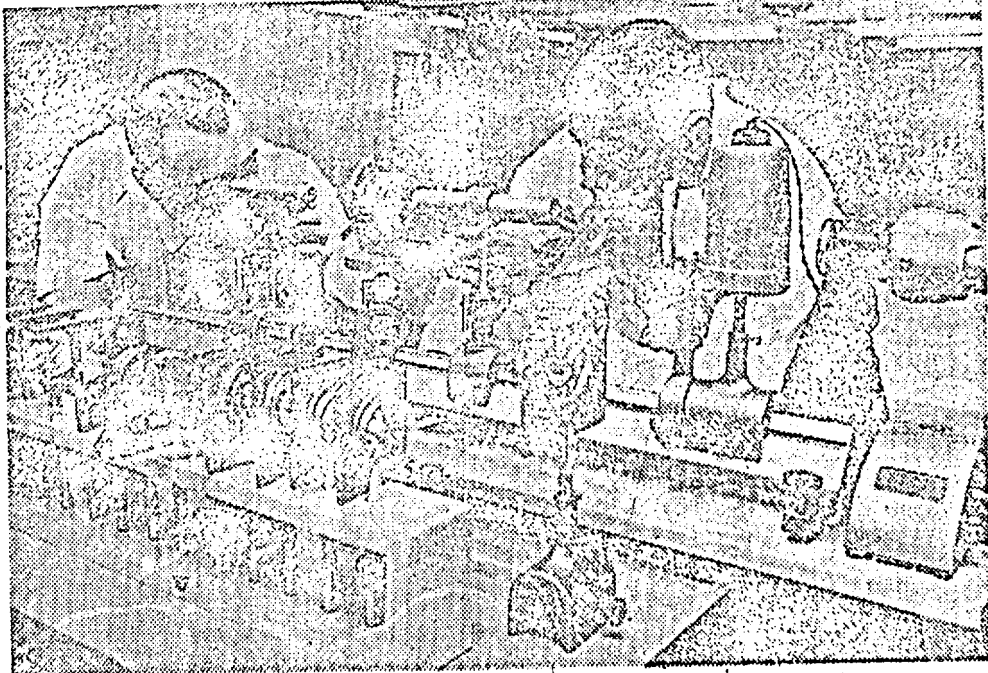
an airborne infantry officer and as a pilot. Later he was with the AC Electronics Division of General Motors and Litton Industries, joining Data Corp. in August, 1966.

Division Is Starting

Currently his division is just getting started in offices and laboratories on the top floor of the Atlas Machine and Iron Works building at 1254 Jefferson Davis Highway. So far there are only five employees, most of them either formerly with the Central Intelligence Agency or the Defense Intelligence Agency. But Vann predicts that in six months there will be 30 employees and in a year about 60.

First installation was a precision optical machine on which Richard E. Swing, chief scientist, has been conducting studies of the spectrum. After that will come a photographic laboratory and an IBM System 360-40 computer equipped with remote teleprocessing equipment which will be a duplicate of two identical 360-40 systems presently operating at Dayton.

Swing, a graduate of Bucknell and formerly with Itek Corp., came to Data Corp. after several years with the CIA. Mrs. Ethel Lee Harris, Vann's administrative assistant, was with the newest addition is Richard



—Star Photographer Francis Routh

Peter J. Vann, eastern manager for Data Corp., watches Richard E. Swing, chief scientist, tackle an optical problem at the company's new division headquarters in Arlington.

H. Giering, the computer manager. A former Army officer and a graduate of the University of Arizona, he most recently was assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency to develop an information storage and retrieval system for intelligence data.

Quite apart from its national defense interests, Data Corp. has developed an information retrieval system that Vann says eliminates the need for microfilm in storing records, copies of newspapers or similar material.

Called (Data) Central, it allows the user to search large volumes of information, magnetically stored, to obtain answers to questions which are structured in an English-like format.

For example, Data Corp. has been conducting a test for the Ohio State Bar Association by programming into its computers all of the syllabi of the Ohio Supreme Court decisions since the state's highest court began recording them in 1853.

The syllabi are the headnotes or abbreviated statements of the

law that preceded every written opinion of the Supreme Court. The test has required the computers to store some 150 million characters and make them instantly available through its "random access" memory system.

Could Aid Lawyers

Francis L. Dale, president of the bar association, said that if the test was successful and enough Ohio lawyers showed interest in the program, "push-button law" would be available in Ohio within a year.

The next step would be to store the estimated 400 million characters and 80 million words contained in the hundreds of volumes of Ohio court decisions in the computers.

Then, an attorney in Cleveland, faced with a knotty problem, could pick up a telephone, pose his question to a computer in Dayton by giving a "key" word, and locate any court decisions having a bearing on the matter.